Goals

A goal should answer the question:
> "What should happen as a result of this weight management program?"

Goals are **broad**, **long-term** visions. Goals do not need to be stated in explicitly measurable terms.

A goal contains two basic elements:
- **Who** will be affected (i.e., Soldiers)
- **What** will change (i.e., decreased percentage of Soldiers flagged for overweight)

Although a goal does not have to be specifically measurable, it must be **reachable**.

> HELPFUL HINT: To create a reachable goal, be sure to consider available resources
>
> and make a realistic appraisal of the weight management program's potential impact.

Realistic goal:
> Reduce the number of Soldiers flagged for overweight in XYZ Battalion
> *Note that this goal states **who** will be affected [Soldiers] and **what** will change [flags for overweight].*

Unrealistic goal:
> Eliminate overweight as a problem in XYZ Battalion

Objectives

Goals are supported by objectives. Objectives consist of specific statements that represent **smaller steps** that must be accomplished in order to meet the program goal(s).

A well-written objective:
- Indicates the **change** that will occur in the **target** population as a result of the program
- Is written in measurable terms: **how much** change will be achieved **by when?**

Specific, measurable objectives also help determine which interventions will **best produce the targeted behavior change**. For example, a health communication intervention should be included in the weight management program to raise awareness of the impact of regular soft drinks on weight gain.

Well-written objective:
By October 2006, decrease from 8% to 5% the percentage of Soldiers in XYZ Battalion who are flagged for overweight.

Bottom line
Goals and objectives will help you evaluate a program. Did you accomplish what you set out to do? Was the program successful in quantitative or qualitative terms? Goals and objectives should be based on a program needs assessment. Taking the time to write out program goals and objectives will keep program activities focused.